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ABSTRACT

This study examined the satisfaction of master of education degree recipients with the Frostburg State College graduate program. Respondents were asked to evaluate the effects of their program experience on their personal growth and on their occupational performance. From 60 to 95 percent of evaluative ratings across items were positive. Ninety-one percent of the respondents were employed in education organizations, and almost three-fourths were teaching. Program advisement and counseling were reported as being available and of reasonably high quality, although access to these services could be improved. There were clusters of positive responses with reference to feelings of personal achievement, valuing by peers, occupational security, and occupational competence. This growth corresponds to a coincidence of 76 percent between completion of the program and receipt of promotion, advance in salary, or increased job responsibility. More than 25 percent of the respondents reported an increase in job responsibility. With the exception of those program objectives which represent skills development and cognitive development, the respondents were positively oriented toward all objectives, but less emphatically so to the following objectives: increased understanding of the mission and function of education; increased interest in adjunct fields of study; and increased ability to seek and find solutions to professional problems. High levels of satisfaction were reported in reference to the faculty, instructional methods, and the effectiveness of the instructional program. (CD)

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The Evaluation and Impact Of The
Master of Education Degree Program
As Reported By Program Graduates

By

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and

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March, 1976

FROSTBURG STATE COLLEGE

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U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH,
EDUCATION & WELFARE
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Statement of Purpose

The purpose of this investigation was to find answers for several questions raised in an attempt to evaluate various aspects of the Master of Education (M.Ed.) degree program of Frostburg State College. The evaluation of the program as represented in this report is based upon a survey of graduates of the program. Some of the questions for which answers were sought were: Were counseling and advisement services available? Were such services of high quality? Has the program been both personally and occupationally valuable for students? Do students feel more competent; more valued; more secure as a result of having entered and completed the program of study? How satisfied are students with the instructional methods, faculty competence, curricular organization, and the effectiveness of the degree program? Of what value were required professional education courses? The answers to these and other questions can aid in overall program evaluation and can provide evidence concerning the impact of the program on students.

Background Information

Frostburg State College began development work for the M.Ed. degree program in the Fall of 1957. In February of 1958, the State Department of Education authorized the College to offer graduate study in education; and the degree program was implemented in the summer of 1958. While the program initially was intended to operate during summer sessions to accommodate the needs of area education professionals, evolution of the program finds that approximately one-half of the program instruction occurs during the academic year of two semesters with the other half occurring during the summer.

The M.Ed. degree program at the College has passed through two distinct developmental phases, and is now in the midst of a third phase. The first phase, development and growth, took place from 1957 to 1966; the second phase, assessment, evaluation, and reorganization, took place from 1967 to 1971; and the third phase, refinement and growth, is currently in progress. Currently, the program is defined as consisting of three distinct components: a professional education core of 3 courses; an area of concentration of from 5 to 6 courses; and elective courses. In the case of the interdisciplinary areas of Guidance and Counseling, and Social Science, the elective component is essentially merged with the area of concentration component. There are now 12 areas of concentration. Within the past 2 years, the areas of Music and English withdrew from the array of concentrations. The areas of concentration currently offered are:

Art	History
Biology	Mathematics
Elementary Administration	Physical Education
Elementary Education	Reading
Geography	Secondary Administration
Guidance & Counseling	Social Science

The majority of students enrolled in the degree program are in the 25-35 year-old age range, and are employed as classroom teachers in Western Maryland, southwestern Pennsylvania, or in northeastern West Virginia. Over 90 percent of the students are enrolled on a part-time basis, although the number of full-time students has increased proportionately in recent years. Approximately 55-60 percent of area education professionals who enroll in graduate courses at the College are enrolled in the degree program. The remainder accumulate credits but do not apply them to a formal program of study. The State of Maryland, in most areas of certification, does not require a master's degree; and, most of the 12 areas of concentration (M.Ed.) are not intended for initial state certification as such certification

is attained at the baccalaureate level.

Enrollment over the past 6 years has increased by approximately 200 percent but degrees awarded have not increased in the same proportion as enrollment since more than 90 percent of students enrolled are part-time students who take from 3 to 6 years to complete the degree program.

The primary objectives of the degree program are:

1. To strengthen the student's skills and knowledge in the area of concentration;
2. To increase understanding of the mission and function of educating in a complex, changing society;
3. To gain more knowledge of the learning process;
4. To stimulate the student's interest in fields which are adjunct to his area of concentration; and
5. To develop skills which will enable the student to define and seek solutions to professional problems.

The program designed to enable students to realize these objectives consists of (1) a nine-credit core of professional education courses designed to develop a foundation for leadership, an understanding of the learning process, and program development and evaluation; (2) an area of concentration; and (3) elective courses.

Justification For The Study

Program development and evaluation take place as a function of the interaction among academic departments, students, the Graduate Studies Committee, and the Director of Graduate Studies. Program development resulting from extensive formative evaluation has been evidenced from the very beginnings of the program. Summative evaluation, however, has been undertaken in a rather informal manner. It was not until standard

program formats, a system of regulations and procedures, analysis of enrollment trends and projections, and an array of student and faculty opinion/perception of program strengths and weaknesses were articulated that long-term program development and summative evaluation could occur in a systematic, meaningful way.

The number of students enrolled in the program, the growth of the program, and the resources allocated to the program demand that the impact of this effort be measured in some way in order that strengths may be identified and reinforced and in order that weaknesses be identified and ameliorated.

Objectives

Primary objectives of the study were:

- (1) To gather basic information from former students which would aid the faculty, Head of the Education Department, the Director of Graduate Studies, and the Graduate Studies Committee (governance agent) evaluate the impact, effectiveness, content, scope, and quality of the Master of Education degree program of study;
- (2) To provide an evaluation report which could be shared with the academic community and among prospective students, and the public; and
- (3) To provide a data base upon which program and course changes could be established.

Secondary objectives of the study were:

- (1) To provide program graduates the opportunity to reflect upon their academic experience; and
- (2) To provide, in essence, an instructional vehicle whereby faculty and staff might participate in a learning experience

ultimately aimed at improving performance.

Follow-Up Studies -- General

Follow-up studies are considered to be one form of summative evaluation. In the case of this investigation a student population served is expected to provide the institution with some assessment of how the educational experience, as provided, has affected the population served.

While many follow-up studies are conducted as in-house projects in various colleges, universities, and school systems, there have been several such studies completed on a large scale with national implications. Notable among such investigations were those conducted by Freedman (2), Flanagan (1), and Pace (4).

Most follow-up studies conducted in colleges and universities are done on a departmental or college-wide basis, and the data and information generated is not usually disseminated for use outside the institution. Examination of Education Abstracts, Dissertation Abstracts, ERIC Clearinghouse reports listings, and the Current Index to Journals in Education yielded very little material on follow-up studies, generally.

Notable among the few documents which examine the uses and abuses of follow-up studies is a paper by Taylor (6), which reports the results of a critical review of 95 follow-up studies. Taylor used evaluative criteria established by Strauss (5) to measure the value of these studies. The strengths and weaknesses of follow-up studies are carefully articulated in Taylor's paper, and the present investigation has attempted to combine and use the suggestions of Taylor and Strauss in order to present a useful and meaningful report. The research reported in this investigation is explained in sufficient detail to permit another researcher at Frostburg State College or any college to replicate the study.

Delimitations of the Investigation

Population -- All recipients of the degree, Master of Education (M.Ed.), earned at Frostburg State College in the academic years 1972-73, 1973-74, and 1974-75 were mailed the evaluation instrument. This population numbered 160, and of the 160 individuals identified as the population, 16 could not be reached (with repeated mailings) hence, the population contacted numbered 144. Of the 144 individuals contacted, 97 returned useable questionnaires. This represented a return of 67.4 percent. While this is not an extremely high rate of return, it nevertheless is a substantial rate of return for this type of survey evaluation (Kerlinger, p. 397). The population average age was 32, and 53 percent of the population were females.

Questionnaire -- All elements of the population were mailed a questionnaire comprised mostly of fixed-choice response items. The use of a mailed questionnaire does not allow the researcher to: check on responses, ask highly complex questions, or to structure the responding environment. The mailed questionnaire does not allow for easy verification of responses, nor can the researcher be certain of the identity of the respondent. The mailed questionnaire is inexpensive and easy to administer; it permits anonymity, and it guarantees, usually, uniform presentation.

Procedures

Definition of Population Surveyed

Most of the relevant details of the population were presented in the preceding section. It was assumed that those individuals who responded to the questionnaire were representative of the population of individuals surveyed. In Table 1, which follows, appears the rate of response by year of graduation. At least 57 percent of each group (per year) responded.

Table 1

Rate of Response to Questionnaire
By Year of Graduation

<u>Year of Graduation</u>	<u>Number Of Graduates</u>	<u>Number of Graduates Responding*</u>	<u>Percentage of Graduates Responding*</u>
1973	53	33	62.2%
1974	58	36	65.5%
1975	49	28	57.1%
Total	160	97	60.6%

*Figures not adjusted for those graduates not reached by mail.

When respondents not reached by mail are eliminated from the respondent pool, the return rate becomes 67.4 percent.

Development of the Questionnaire

The questionnaire used as the survey instrument was developed over time and evolved into a finished product as the result of activities segmented into the following phases:

- (1) Development - The director of graduate studies first listed a set of questions about the program to which answers were desired. These questions reflect the basic purpose and objectives of the survey. The broad categories of questions had to do with quality of advisement and counseling; personal valuing; quality of faculty, curriculum, instructional methods and organization; and valuing of specific courses.
- (2) Questionnaire Draft - The questions were translated into items for a questionnaire. Most items were of the closed-end, fixed-response type.
- (3) Review Panel - A panel of five individuals was asked to critique the draft questionnaire for organization, clarity, and, in the

case of general evaluative items, content. All of the individuals queried had published research in major journals and all had previously performed survey research. All panel members submitted modifications for inclusion in the revised draft.

- (4) Revised Draft - The revision of the questionnaire incorporated the suggestions of the review panel.
- (5) Field Testing - As a final step, the questionnaire was presented to a sample of staff members who were asked to complete the questionnaire according to instructions. Ambiguities reported in items (questions) and instructions were then corrected while maintaining the intent of the items.

A copy of the questionnaire is found in the appendix of this report.

Data Management

Specific details of data management are reported in the appendix. The data elements were placed on data processing coding sheets as questionnaires were received and item responses transferred from questionnaire forms to coding sheets. The processing of questionnaires and the logistics of the survey as an activity are documented in the appendix.

Data Analysis

While the data and information generated in this investigation may be subject to relatively sophisticated analysis for a variety of research questions, the purpose of this investigation was to obtain straight-forward answers to straight-forward questions, and since the product of the investigation was to be disseminated to various and diverse audiences, it was decided to limit the data treatment to a frequency analysis of each item.

Items are examined individually and as they contribute to knowledge regarding broader aspects of the program in question. All questionnaire input data was processed via the CODEBOOK data analysis program of the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS-Version 5). The SPSS is made available to users from the Maryland State Colleges Information Center located at Towson State College in Baltimore.

Organization of Analysis

Each questionnaire item is displayed in table form to allow for ease of examination. As these tables present information which is self-evident, comment concerning interpretation and analysis is minimal. Major groupings of items contain summaries of pertinent information. These major groups are: General Information, Personal Information, Curriculum--General, and Curriculum--Courses.

Results

General Information (Items 1 through 6)

With reference to availability of program advisement and counseling (Item 2) almost 95 percent of respondents reported that such services were available, but a large proportion of respondents (42.3 percent) said that contacting faculty for such services was difficult at times. This matter should receive further attention to determine what kinds of adjustments might be made. Almost 93 percent of the respondents were satisfied with advisement and counseling services received. Quality and access represent different issues. The 97 respondents reported an area of concentration distribution (Item 4) which is a good approximation of the actual population of degree recipients with the exception of the area of Reading in which case the frequency reported is higher than anticipated for a three-

year average. The vast majority of graduates are employed in public schools (kindergarten through high school) although 7.2 percent are employed in colleges. Not one respondent reported being employed in business or industry, and 13 percent of the respondents did not report an employment category. It may be that several members of the respondent group are unemployed or are employed in an organization (such as the military) not represented in the response categories. As revealed in item 6, most respondents are employed as teachers (73.2 percent), and another 10.3 percent are employed in guidance and counseling, and another 7.2 percent are employed in an administrative capacity at either the school or system level. Obviously, the teaching faculty (see item 5) is divided almost equally between the elementary and secondary divisions.

General Information

Questionnaire Item #1

In what year did you receive your M.Ed. degree?

<u>Year</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>% of Total</u>
1971	0	0.0
1972	0	0.0
1973	33	34.0
1974	36	37.1
1975	<u>28</u>	<u>28.9</u>
Total	97	100.0

Questionnaire Item #2

With reference to your seeking program advice and counsel while enrolled as a student in the M.Ed. program, would you please check the category below which characterizes your experience.

<u>Advisement</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>% of Total</u>
Not applicable	0	0.0
Readily available	51	52.5
Available--but contacting faculty difficult at times	41	42.3
Difficult to decide	2	2.1
Not readily available	2	2.1
Practically inaccessible	<u>1</u>	<u>1.0</u>
Total	97	100.0

Questionnaire Item #3

How satisfied were you with the quality of advisement and program counseling you received?

<u>Quality of Advisement</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>% of Total</u>
Not applicable	0	0.0
Extremely satisfied	57	58.8
Somewhat satisfied	33	34.0
Difficult to decide	4	4.1
Somewhat dissatisfied	3	3.1
Extremely dissatisfied	<u>0</u>	<u>0.0</u>
Total	97	100.0

Questionnaire Item #4

In which area of concentration did you receive your M.Ed. degree?

<u>Area of Concentration</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>% of Total</u>
Art Education	3	3.1
Biology	4	4.1
Elementary Administration	12	12.4
Elementary Education	16	16.4
English	1	1.0
Geography	0	0.0
Guidance & Counseling	17	17.5
History	3	3.1
Mathematics	2	2.1
Music	2	2.1
Physical Education	14	14.4
Reading	12	12.4
Secondary Administration	6	6.2
Social Science	5	5.2
Interdisciplinary	<u>0</u>	<u>0.0</u>
	97	100.0

Questionnaire Item #5

In what type of occupational setting are you currently employed?

Occupational Setting	Number	% of Total
Not applicable	3	3.1
Project Center	0	0.0
Clinic (Read., Spec. Educ.)	0	0.0
Kindergarten	2	2.1
Elementary School	32	33.0
Middle School	1	1.0
Junior High School	5	5.2
Junior/Senior High School	19	19.6
High School	15	15.5
Community College	3	3.1
College or University	4	4.1
Postsecondary Vocational School	1	1.0
Business or Industry	0	0.0
Religious or Charitable Organ.	0	0.0
Non-Profit Social Service Agency	2	2.0
Other	10	10.3
Total	97	100.0

Questionnaire Item #6

Which of the following functions describes the primary focus of your occupation?

Focus of occupation	Number	% of Total
Not applicable	5	5.2
Teaching - Instruction	71	73.2
Administration - School Level	3	3.1
Administration - District Lev.	2	2.1
Supervision of Instruction	1	1.0
Guidance & Counseling	10	10.3
Student Personnel	1	1.0
Other	4	4.1
Total	97	100.0

Personal Information (Items 7 through 12)

Almost 89 percent of the respondents reported feelings of increased competence as a result of program experiences. About one-tenth of that proportion reported no change in competence. Not one respondent indicated that the program did not fulfill his/her personal purposes for enrolling in the program. About three respondents in five felt that they are more valued by their peers as a result of having completed the program of study (Item 9). A high proportion (38.1 percent) reported no change in valuing by peers. Valuing as a result of degree attainment may be biased somewhat with respect to this population since attainment of such a degree or its equivalent is mandated by state regulation for the majority of the population members. Such a condition can help to explain the distribution of responses to Item 10, also (security in position). At least 76.3 percent of the respondents reported receiving one of the following: a promotion, an advance in salary, or more job responsibility. Perhaps all employers of these education professionals provide a salary increase as a result of master's degree attainment, hence it is anticipated that many respondents will report an increase in salary (as did 74.2 percent). Perhaps most important is the fact that 25.8 percent reported being given more job responsibility. This information is not intended, unilaterally, to imply a cause and effect relationship between program experience and resultant job experience. Only 5.2 percent of the respondents reported that the program had little or no value for them, occupationally.

Personal Information

Questionnaire Item #7

With my degree and experience in the M.Ed. program, I feel:

<u>Competency</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>% of Total</u>
Extremely competent	19	19.6
More competent	67	69.0
No change in competence	9	9.3
Less competent	0	0.0
Inadequate	0	0.0
No response	<u>2</u>	<u>2.1</u>
Total	97	100.0

Questionnaire Item #8

Because of the program, I feel that I have achieved my personal purposes in enrolling in the program:

<u>Achieved personal Purposes</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>% of Total</u>
Completely	24	24.8
For the most part	62	63.9
To limited extent	7	7.2
Slightly	3	3.1
Not at all	0	0.0
No response	<u>1</u>	<u>1.0</u>
Total	97	100.0

Questionnaire Item #9

Because of my degree in the M.Ed program, I feel:

<u>Value by Peers</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>% of Total</u>
Very highly valued by peers	5	5.2
More valued by peers	54	55.7
No change in value	37	38.1
Less valued by peers	0	0.0
Not valued by peers	0	0.0
No response	<u>1</u>	<u>1.0</u>
Total	97	100.0

Questionnaire Item #10

With my degree and experience in the M. Ed.
program, I feel:

<u>Security in position</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>% of Total</u>
Extremely secure in position	17	17.5
More secure in position	53	54.6
No change in security	25	25.8
Less secure in position	0	0.0
Insecure in position	0	0.0
No response	<u>2</u>	<u>2.1</u>
Total	97	100.0

Questionnaire Item #11

With my degree and experience in the M. Educ. program, I have been: (Promoted, Advanced in salary, Given more responsibility, Other, None of these) Choose 1 or more.

	<u>Number</u>	<u>% of Total</u>
Promotion Received	11	11.3
No response	86	88.7
Total	<u>97</u>	<u>100.0</u>
Advanced in Salary	72	74.2
No response	25	25.8
Total	<u>97</u>	<u>100.0</u>
Given More Responsibility	25	25.8
No response	72	74.2
Total	<u>97</u>	<u>100.0</u>
Other	11	11.3
No response	86	88.7
Total	<u>97</u>	<u>100.0</u>
None of These	12	12.4
No response	85	87.6
Total	<u>97</u>	<u>100.0</u>

Questionnaire Item #12

In general, how valuable occupationally has your M.Ed. educational experience been?

<u>Occupational value</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>% of Total</u>
Not applicable	6	6.2
Extremely valuable	39	40.2
Moderately valuable	36	37.1
Difficult to decide	11	11.3
Of relatively little value	5	5.2
Of no value whatsoever	<u>0</u>	<u>0.0</u>
Total	97	100.0

Curriculum - General (Items 13, and 17 through 21)

Each of the program's five objectives was evaluated by respondents in terms of how well the objective was met in the individual's experience as a student in the program. At least 73 percent of the respondents, across objectives, believed that the objectives were met. Of the five objectives, strengthening student's skills and knowledge in the area of concentration, and gaining knowledge of the learning process were those objectives reported as being most substantially realized. The less precise objectives of increasing interest in adjunct fields, increasing ability to define and seek solutions to professional problems, and increasing understanding of the mission and function of educating were reported as not being realized to the extent that other objectives were realized. More respondents believed that the latter three objectives were either marginally met or not met at all. To the extent that these latter three objectives were vague and imprecise, it perhaps became more difficult for the respondent to feel confident about the extent to which such objectives were realized. It is clear, however, that respondents were quite confident about reporting increased skills and knowledge in the area of concentration. Only one respondent chose not to rate this objective. Approximately 80 percent of the respondents reported that courses are taught at an appropriate level of difficulty. Several were not sure. The question may have been too general when one considers that each student had taken core courses, specialty courses, and the like.

Examination of responses to items 18-21 yielded useful information regarding the important areas of student satisfaction with the following: the faculty, the instructional methods, the organization of instruction, and the effectiveness of the instructional program. The response patterns for the latter three items were quite similar with all items receiving positive

valuations. The interesting feature of item 18 (satisfaction with instructional faculty) was that nearly half of the respondents reported that they were "extremely satisfied" with the faculty, and another 44 percent indicated that they were "moderately satisfied." These findings appear quite positive and point to perhaps the major strength of the program. The organization of the program of study (item 20) received the most critical comment of the four items. The design of the program had been altered considerably during 1974 and 1975, but the respondents did not have the benefit of the new, more definitive program structure.

Curriculum - General

Program Objectives: Please provide us with your estimate of the extent to which the following program objectives were met in your experience in the M.Ed. program.

Questionnaire Item #13-A

Program Objective: To strengthen the student's skills and knowledge in the area of concentration

Extent to which objective was met	Number	% of Total
Not applicable	1	1.0
Met to a large extent	65	67.0
Met to some extent	27	27.8
Difficult to decide	0	0.0
Met only marginally	2	2.1
Not met	<u>2</u>	<u>2.1</u>
Total	97	100.0

Questionnaire Item #13-B

Program Objective: To increase the student's understanding of the mission and function of educating in a complex society

<u>Extent to which objective was met</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>% of Total</u>
Not applicable	4	4.1
Met to a large extent	23	23.7
Met to some extent	48	49.6
Difficult to decide	10	10.3
Met only marginally	8	8.2
Not met	<u>4</u>	<u>4.1</u>
Total	97	100.0

Questionnaire Item #13-C

Program Objective: To gain more knowledge of the learning process

<u>Extent to which objective was met</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>% of Total</u>
Not applicable	2	2.1
Met to a large extent	33	34.0
Met to some extent	47	48.5
Difficult to decide	7	7.2
Met only marginally	8	8.2
Not met	<u>0</u>	<u>0.0</u>
Total	97	100.0

Questionnaire Item #13-D

Program Objective: To stimulate the student's interest in fields which are adjunct to his area of concentration

Extent to which objective was met	Number	% of Total
Not applicable	4	4.1
Met to a large extent	32	33.0
Met to some extent	43	44.3
Difficult to decide	4	4.1
Met only marginally	9	9.3
Not met	5	5.2
Total	97	100.0

Questionnaire Item #13-E

Program Objective: To develop skills which will enable the student to define and seek solutions to professional problems

Extent to which objective was met	Number	% of Total
Not applicable	2	2.1
Met to a large extent	32	33.0
Met to some extent	43	44.3
Difficult to decide	5	5.1
Met only marginally	12	12.4
Not met	3	3.1
Total	97	100.0

Questionnaire Item #17

Are the courses taught at an appropriate level of difficulty?

<u>Appropriateness</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>% of Total</u>
Appropriate	42	43.3
Less appropriate	36	37.1
Undecided	11	11.3
Somewhat inappropriate	1	1.0
Inappropriate	1	1.0
No response	<u>6</u>	<u>6.3</u>
Total	97	100.0

Questionnaire Item #18

In terms of your overall educational experience in the Frostburg State College M.Ed. Program, how satisfied are you with the instructional faculty?

<u>Faculty</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>% of Total</u>
Not applicable	2	2.1
Extremely satisfied	47	48.5
Moderately satisfied	43	44.3
Difficult to decide	1	1.0
Moderately dissatisfied	3	3.1
Extremely dissatisfied	<u>1</u>	<u>1.0</u>
Total	97	100.0

Questionnaire Item #19

In terms of your overall educational experience in the Frostburg State College M.Ed. Program, how satisfied are you with the instructional methods?

<u>Instructional methods</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>% of Total</u>
Not applicable	2	2.1
Extremely satisfied	26	26.8
Moderately satisfied	57	58.8
Difficult to decide	4	4.1
Moderately dissatisfied	6	6.1
Extremely dissatisfied	<u>2</u>	<u>2.1</u>
Total	97	100.0

Questionnaire Item #20

In terms of your overall educational experience in the Frostburg State College M.Ed. Program, how satisfied are you with the instructional organization?

<u>Instructional Organization</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>% of Total</u>
Not applicable	2	2.1
Extremely satisfied	25	25.7
Moderately satisfied	52	53.6
Difficult to decide	5	5.2
Moderately dissatisfied	12	12.4
Extremely dissatisfied	<u>1</u>	<u>1.0</u>
Total	97	100.0

Questionnaire Item #21

In terms of your overall educational experience in the Frostburg State College M.Ed. Program, how satisfied are you with the effectiveness of the instructional program?

<u>Program Effectiveness</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>% of Total</u>
Not applicable	2	2.1
Extremely satisfied	28	28.8
Moderately satisfied	58	59.8
Difficult to decide	4	4.1
Moderately dissatisfied	3	3.1
Extremely dissatisfied	<u>2</u>	<u>2.1</u>
Total	97	100.0

Curriculum - Professional Education Courses

The information contained in the evaluation of each course on two dimensions (occupational value; personal value) has import for curriculum analysis vis-a-vis stated program objectives. In this instance, such analysis is, for the most part, a backward look since the revised curriculum does not afford the latitude of course choice as did the preceding program structure; and a student is now required to complete three specific courses in a professional education core. While the course ratings data can be examined in a variety of ways, it was decided to examine only those courses for which at least 40 percent of the respondents supplied an evaluative rating. Only four of the eleven courses included in this part of the investigation meet this criterion. This means that at least 40 percent of the respondents decided to provide a valuation for each of the four courses. The four courses

are:

- 601 - Current Trends in Curriculum
- 602 - Advanced Human Growth and Development
- 603 - Principles and Practices of Research
- 640 - Curriculum Development

It must be noted that for some students one or more of these four courses were required to fulfill degree requirements either as part of the area of concentration or to meet the requirement that half of all program courses had to be at the 600-level. Hence, for several students, choice of professional education courses was constrained in some measure. In examining the four courses, one learns that valuing expressed as positive responses and negative responses indicates a one-to-one correspondence between occupational value and personal value. That is, respondents tend to rate the course's value approximately the same way across the two dimensions. The two curriculum courses bound the upper (601) and lower (640) limits of the positive responses while the research course (603) clearly generated the most negative response. Research courses have traditionally been regarded with awe and apprehension by many master's degree students. Many (40 percent) respondents, nevertheless, positively valued the research course.

Professional Education Courses: Occupational and Personal Values

Course Title: History of Education

Course Number: 404/504

<u>Occupational Value</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>% of Total</u>
Not applicable	86	88.6
Extremely valuable	0	0.0
Moderately valuable	2	2.1
Difficult to decide	1	1.0
Of relatively little value	5	5.2
Of no value whatsoever	<u>3</u>	<u>3.1</u>
Total	97	100.0

Course Title: History of Education

Course Number: 404/504

<u>Personal Value</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>% of Total</u>
Not applicable	86	88.7
Extremely valuable	1	1.0
Moderately valuable	4	4.1
Difficult to decide	0	0.0
Of relatively little value	4	4.1
Of no value whatsoever	<u>2</u>	<u>2.1</u>
Total	97	100.0

Course Title: Philosophy of Education

Course Number: 405/505

<u>Occupational Value</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>% of Total</u>
Not applicable	71	73.2
Extremely valuable	8	8.2
Moderately valuable	8	8.2
Difficult to decide	2	2.1
Of relatively little value	5	5.2
Of no value whatsoever	<u>3</u>	<u>3.1</u>
Total	97	100.0

Course Title: Philosophy of Education

Course Number: 405/505

<u>Personal Value</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>% of Total</u>
Not applicable	71	73.2
Extremely valuable	12	12.4
Moderately valuable	9	9.3
Difficult to decide	0	0.0
Of relatively little value	3	3.1
Of no value whatsoever	<u>2</u>	<u>2.0</u>
Total	97	100.0

Course Title: Tests and Measurements

Course Number: 408/508

<u>Occupational Value</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>% of Total</u>
Not applicable	74	76.3
Extremely valuable	16	16.5
Moderately valuable	5	5.2
Difficult to decide	1	1.0
Of relatively little value	0	0.0
Of no value whatsoever	<u>1</u>	<u>1.0</u>
Total	97	100.0

Course Title: Tests and Measurements

Course Number: 408/508

<u>Personal Value</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>% of Total</u>
Not applicable	75	77.4
Extremely valuable	7	7.2
Moderately valuable	7	7.2
Difficult to decide	4	4.1
Of relatively little value	3	3.1
Of no value whatsoever	<u>1</u>	<u>1.0</u>
Total	97	100.0

Course Title: Mental Hygiene

Course Number: 411/511

<u>Occupational Value</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>% of Total</u>
Not applicable	68	70.1
Extremely valuable	6	6.2
Moderately valuable	13	13.3
Difficult to decide	3	3.1
Of relatively little value	2	2.1
Of no value whatsoever	<u>5</u>	<u>5.2</u>
Total	97	100.0

Course Title: Mental Hygiene

Course Number: 411/511

<u>Personal Value</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>% of Total</u>
Not applicable	66	68.1
Extremely valuable	11	11.3
Moderately valuable	10	10.3
Difficult to decide	4	4.1
Of relatively little value	3	3.1
Of no value whatsoever	<u>3</u>	<u>3.1</u>
Total	97	100.0

Course Title: Current Trends in Curriculum

Course Number: 601

<u>Occupational Value</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>% of Total</u>
Not applicable	38	39.2
Extremely valuable	23	23.7
Moderately valuable	29	29.9
Difficult to decide	4	4.1
Of relatively little value	2	2.1
Of no value whatsoever	<u>1</u>	<u>1.0</u>
Total	97	100.0

Course Title: Current Trends in Curriculum

Course Number: 601

<u>Personal Value</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>% of Total</u>
Not applicable	40	41.2
Extremely valuable	25	25.8
Moderately valuable	21	21.7
Difficult to decide	6	6.2
Of relatively little value	4	4.1
Of no value whatsoever	<u>1</u>	<u>1.0</u>
Total	97	100.0

Course Title: Advanced Human Growth & Development

Course Number: 602

<u>Occupational Value</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>% of Total</u>
Not applicable	38	39.2
Extremely valuable	17	17.5
Moderately valuable	27	27.8
Difficult to decide	6	6.2
Of relatively little value	5	5.2
Of no value whatsoever	<u>4</u>	<u>4.1</u>
Total	97	100.0

Course Title: Advanced Human Growth & Development

Course Number: 602

<u>Personal Value</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>% of Total</u>
Not applicable	41	42.3
Extremely valuable	22	22.7
Moderately valuable	20	20.6
Difficult to decide	3	3.1
Of relatively little value	7	7.2
Of no value whatsoever	<u>4</u>	<u>4.1</u>
Total	97	100.0

Course Title: Principles and Practices of Research
Course Number: 603

<u>Occupational Value</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>% of Total</u>
Not applicable	18	18.6
Extremely valuable	6	6.2
Moderately valuable	33	34.0
Difficult to decide	14	14.4
Of relatively little value	21	21.6
Of no value whatsoever	<u>5</u>	<u>5.2</u>
Total	97	100.0

Course Title: Principles and Practices of Research
Course Number: 603

<u>Personal Value</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>% of Total</u>
Not applicable	17	17.5
Extremely valuable	13	13.4
Moderately valuable	26	26.8
Difficult to decide	12	12.4
Of relatively little value	22	22.7
Of no value whatsoever	<u>7</u>	<u>7.2</u>
Total	97	100.0

Course Title: Comparative Education

Course Number: 607

<u>Occupational Value</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>% of Total</u>
Not applicable	91	93.8
Extremely valuable	1	1.0
Moderately valuable	4	4.2
Difficult to decide	1	1.0
Of relatively little value	0	0.0
Of no value whatsoever	<u>0</u>	<u>0.0</u>
Total	97	100.0

Course Title: Comparative Education

Course Number: 607

<u>Personal Value</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>% of Total</u>
Not applicable	91	93.8
Extremely valuable	4	4.2
Moderately valuable	1	1.0
Difficult to decide	1	1.0
Of relatively little value	0	0.0
Of no value whatsoever	<u>0</u>	<u>0.0</u>
Total	97	100.0

Course Title: Curriculum Development

Course Number: 640

<u>Occupational Value</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>% of Total</u>
Not applicable	58	59.7
Extremely valuable	19	19.6
Moderately valuable	16	16.5
Difficult to decide	2	2.1
Of relatively little value	2	2.1
Of no value whatsoever	<u>0</u>	<u>0.0</u>
Total	97	100.0

Course Title: Curriculum Development

Course Number: 640

<u>Personal Value</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>% of Total</u>
Not applicable	57	58.8
Extremely valuable	16	16.5
Moderately valuable	19	19.6
Difficult to decide	4	4.1
Of relatively little value	0	0.0
Of no value whatsoever	<u>1</u>	<u>1.0</u>
Total	97	100.0

Course Title: Advanced Educational Psychology

Course Number: 647

<u>Occupational Value</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>% of Total</u>
Not applicable	88	90.8
Extremely valuable	3	3.1
Moderately valuable	4	4.1
Difficult to decide	1	1.0
Of relatively little value	0	0.0
Of no value whatsoever	<u>1</u>	<u>1.0</u>
Total	97	100.0

Course Title: Advanced Educational Psychology

Course Number: 647

<u>Personal Value</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>% of Total</u>
Not applicable	88	90.7
Extremely valuable	2	2.1
Moderately valuable	5	5.2
Difficult to decide	1	1.0
Of relatively little value	1	1.0
Of no value whatsoever	<u>0</u>	<u>0.0</u>
Total	97	100.0

Course Title: Secondary School Curriculum
Course Number: 660

<u>Occupational Value</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>% of Total</u>
Not applicable	89	91.6
Extremely valuable	3	3.2
Moderately valuable	2	2.1
Difficult to decide	0	0.0
Of relatively little value	2	2.1
Of no value whatsoever	<u>1</u>	<u>1.0</u>
Total	97	100.0

Course Title: Secondary School Curriculum
Course Number: 660

<u>Personal Value</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>% of Total</u>
Not applicable	89	91.6
Extremely valuable	2	2.1
Moderately valuable	2	2.1
Difficult to decide	2	2.1
Of relatively little value	0	0.0
Of no value whatsoever	<u>2</u>	<u>2.1</u>
Total	97	100.0

Conclusions

Given that approximately two-thirds of the population under investigation supplied responses to questions, it can be concluded that M.Ed. degree recipients are quite satisfied with their experience in the program of study. Respondents were asked to evaluate the effects of their program experience on their personal growth and on their occupational performance. The expression, "quite satisfied" can be operationally defined as follows: since from 60 to 95 percent of evaluative ratings across items were placed in the positive domain demonstrating a positive valuing of the program, it follows that satisfaction with the program was high.

As hoped, 91 percent of the respondents are employed in education organizations, and almost three-fourths of them are teaching. Program advisement and counseling was reported as being available and of reasonably high quality, although access to these services could be improved. There were clusters of positive responses with reference to feelings of personal achievement, valuing by peers, occupational security, and occupational competence. This growth corresponds to a coincidence of 76 percent between completion of the program and receipt of promotion, advance in salary, or increased job responsibility. More than 25 percent of the respondents reported an increase in job responsibility. This finding may be construed as evidence of real, personal growth.

With the exception of those program objectives which represent skills development and cognitive development, the respondents were positively oriented (toward all objectives), but less emphatically, to the following objectives: increased understanding of the mission and function of education; increased interest in adjunct fields of study; and, increased ability to seek and find solutions to professional problems.

High levels of satisfaction were reported in reference to the faculty, instructional methods, and the effectiveness of the instructional program. While four-fifths of the respondents were satisfied with the organization of the curriculum, 13 percent were dissatisfied.

Overall, the results indicate that the program is serving the needs of education professionals and is doing so while generating moderate to high feelings of satisfaction on the part of students completing the program. There is room for improvement in many areas as this investigation makes apparent. The investigation also makes clear the fact that the program is a success as it benefits the student personally and occupationally, and as it contributes to the enhancement of the quality of life for present and future generations in Western Maryland and contiguous areas.

Recommendations

1. Advisement and counseling services should be made available to students during evening hours or weekends at scheduled times. Access to such services would be greatly enhanced.
2. A form of employee evaluation may be desirable for having the graduate's employer rate the graduate's functioning, competence, and organizational contributions as these factors may relate to educational experiences.
3. There should be a greater specificity of some program (overall) objectives to: (1) align these objectives with new program structure and content; and, (2) allow for measurement in some way of attainment of these objectives.
4. There should be a focused effort to strengthen the student's knowledge of the teaching/learning process.

5. In order to reinforce the concept of professionalism in the field of education, a required one-credit course might be offered. Such a course could be of the discussion type with emphasis on the field of education and its place in the present and future.

6. In order to provide continuity in evaluation and in order to use the the present set of data as baseline measures, the present investigation (with appropriate modifications) should be continued on an annual basis for the next two years.

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APPENDIX



FROSTBURG STATE COLLEGE
FROSTBURG, MARYLAND 21532

OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT

Dear

I am requesting your assistance in the evaluation of various aspects of the academic program at Frostburg State College. The College's graduate programs are being evaluated as part of an on-going process of study for improvement. In addition, the College is preparing for its decennial accreditation visit by the Middle States Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools.

You are being asked to assist the Graduate Studies Office in this important work of assessing how well the College is doing its job. As you have earned a master's degree at Frostburg State College (either on campus or by extension), we believe your perceptions and opinions as recorded on the enclosed questionnaire will represent the most valuable kind of information we can obtain regarding the functioning of our graduate program.

Thank you in advance for your help.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Nelson P. Guild".

Nelson P. Guild
President

NPG:mw

Enclosure

SURVEY OF STUDENT OPINION ON SELECTED
ASPECTS OF THE MASTER OF EDUCATION
DEGREE PROGRAM

The Graduate Studies Office is requesting that you respond to the several items in this questionnaire in order that we may have access to your evaluative judgments concerning various aspects of the Master of Education (M.Ed.) degree program. As you were successful in this program, we value your opinion and urge you to complete and return this questionnaire.

INSTRUCTIONS

You can be assured that your responses are guaranteed anonymity. You will notice that the return envelope has your address label on it. This is for materials control purposes only. When we receive your completed questionnaire, we record the fact that you returned one, then we throw the empty envelope out. In this way we know which alumni we need to contact a second time.

You will find that most of the items in the questionnaire require you to respond with an "X" or check-mark in a particular response set. There are several open-ended items, too.

Your responses will form the basis for our evaluation of the program, hence it is important that most or all alumni respond to all items.

When you complete the questionnaire, place it in the envelope provided and mail it.

Thank you in advance for your assistance. If you have questions or comments concerning this evaluation, please feel free to write or phone Dr. Paul Lyons, Director of Graduate Studies, Frostburg State College, Frostburg, Maryland 21532 (301) 689-4231.

A. GENERAL

1. In what year did you receive your M.Ed. degree? (Place an "X" on line corresponding to appropriate response.)

____ (0) 1971
 ____ (1) 1972
 ____ (2) 1973
 ____ (3) 1974
 ____ (4) 1975

2. With reference to your seeking program advice and counsel while enrolled as a student in the M.Ed. program, would you please check the category below which characterizes your experience:

____ 0 Not applicable
 ____ 1 Advisement and program counseling were readily available
 ____ 2 Advisement and program counseling were available but contacting faculty or staff was difficult at times.
 ____ 3 Difficult to decide
 ____ 4 Advisement and program counseling were not readily available
 ____ 5 Advisement and program counseling were practically inaccessible.

3. How satisfied were you with the quality of the advisement and program counseling you received? (Check one response.)

____ 0 Not applicable
 ____ 1 Extremely satisfied with quality
 ____ 2 Somewhat satisfied with quality
 ____ 3 Difficult to decide
 ____ 4 Somewhat dissatisfied with quality
 ____ 5 Extremely dissatisfied with quality

4. In which area of concentration did you receive your M.Ed. degree? (Check one.)

____ (1) Art Education	____ (9) Mathematics
____ (2) Biology	____ (10) Music
____ (3) Elementary Administration	____ (11) Physical Education
____ (4) Elementary Education	____ (12) Reading
____ (5) English	____ (13) Secondary Administration
____ (6) Geography	____ (14) Social Science
____ (7) Guidance & Counseling	____ (15) Interdisciplinary
____ (8) History	

5. In what type of occupational setting are you currently employed? (Please check only one response.).

- ☐ 0 Not applicable
- ☐ 1 Project Center
- ☐ 2 Clinic (Reading, Special Education, etc.)
- ☐ 3 Kindergarten
- ☐ 4 Elementary School
- ☐ 5 Middle School
- ☐ 6 Junior High School
- ☐ 7 Junior/Senior High School
- ☐ 8 High School
- ☐ 9 Community College
- ☐ 10 College or University
- ☐ 11 Postsecondary Vocational School
- ☐ 12 Business or Industry
- ☐ 13 Religious or Charitable organization
- ☐ 14 Non-Profit Social Service agency (i.e., welfare, social security, etc.)
- ☐ 15 Other _____

6. Which of the following functions (check one) describes the primary focus of your occupation?

- ☐ 0 Not applicable
- ☐ 1 Teaching - Instruction
- ☐ 2 Administration - School level
- ☐ 3 Administration - District level
- ☐ 4 Supervision of Instruction
- ☐ 5 Guidance and Counseling
- ☐ 6 Student Personnel
- ☐ 7 Other _____

B. PERSONAL

7. With my degree and experience in the M.Ed. program, I feel:

- _____ 1 Extremely competent in my position
- _____ 2 More competent in my position
- _____ 3 No change in competence
- _____ 4 Less competent in my position
- _____ 5 Inadequate in my position

8. Because of the program, I feel that I have achieved my personal purposes in enrolling in the program:

- _____ 1 Completely
- _____ 2 For the most part
- _____ 3 To a limited extent
- _____ 4 Slightly
- _____ 5 Not at all

9. Because of my degree in the M.Ed. program, I feel:

- _____ 1 Very highly valued by my peers
- _____ 2 More valued by my peers
- _____ 3 No change in value
- _____ 4 Less valued by my peers
- _____ 5 Not valued by my peers

10. With my degree and experience in the M.Ed. program, I feel:

- _____ 1 Extremely secure in my position
- _____ 2 More secure in my position
- _____ 3 No change in security
- _____ 4 Less secure in my position
- _____ 5 Insecure in my position

11. With my degree and experiences in the M.Ed. program, I have been:
(Circle 1 or more.)

- _____ 1 Promoted
- _____ 2 Advanced in salary
- _____ 3 Given more responsibility
- _____ 4 Other _____
- _____ 5 None of these

12. In general, how valuable occupationally has your M.Ed. educational experience been? (Check one response.)

- _____ 0 Not applicable
- _____ 1 Extremely valuable
- _____ 2 Moderately valuable
- _____ 3 Difficult to decide
- _____ 4 Of relatively little value
- _____ 5 Of no value whatsoever

C. CURRICULUM - GENERAL

13. Program Objectives:

Below you will find the stated objectives of the M.Ed. degree program. The objectives are:

- _____ A To strengthen the student's skills and knowledge in the area of concentration.
- _____ B To increase the student's understanding of the mission and function of educating in a complex society.
- _____ C To gain more knowledge of the learning process.
- _____ D To stimulate the student's interest in fields which are adjunct to his area of concentration.
- _____ E To develop skills which will enable the student to define and seek solutions to professional problems.

We want you to provide us with your estimate of the extent to which these particular objectives were met in your experience in the M.Ed. program.

For each of the statements A - E (above), select one of the following descriptions below and enter the number of that description on the line preceding the particular objective, A - E.

- 0 Not applicable
- 1 This objective was met to a large extent in my experience in the M.Ed. program.
- 2 This objective was met to some extent in my experience in the M.Ed. program
- 3 Difficult to decide.
- 4 This objective was met only marginally in my experience in the M.Ed. program.
- 5 This objective was not met in my experience in the M.Ed. program.

14. How do you think the scope of the curriculum in the M.Ed. program could be improved? Please be as specific as possible.
15. How do you think the methods of instruction in the M.Ed. program could be improved? Please be as specific as possible.
16. How do you think evaluation of students in the M.Ed. program could be improved? Please be as specific as possible.

17. Are the courses taught at an appropriate level of difficulty (circle one number)?

1	2	3	4	5
appropriate				inappropriate

18. In terms of your overall educational experience in the Frostburg State College M.Ed. Program, how satisfied are you with the instructional faculty?
(Check one response.)

0	Not applicable
1	Extremely satisfied
2	Moderately satisfied
3	Difficult to decide
4	Moderately dissatisfied
5	Extremely dissatisfied

19. In terms of your overall educational experience in the Frostburg State College M.Ed. Program, how satisfied are you with the instructional methods?

_____	0	Not applicable
_____	1	Extremely satisfied
_____	2	Moderately satisfied
_____	3	Difficult to decide
_____	4	Moderately dissatisfied
_____	5	Extremely dissatisfied

20. In terms of your overall educational experience in the Frostburg State College M.Ed. Program, how satisfied are you with the instructional organization (curriculum)?

0	Not applicable
1	Extremely satisfied
2	Moderately satisfied
3	Difficult to decide
4	Moderately dissatisfied
5	Extremely dissatisfied

21. In terms of your overall educational experience in the Frostburg State College M.Ed. Program, how satisfied are you with the effectiveness of the instructional program?

0	Not applicable
1	Extremely satisfied
2	Moderately satisfied
3	Difficult to decide
4	Moderately dissatisfied
5	Extremely dissatisfied

- D. PROFESSIONAL EDUCATION COURSES - Most students in the M.Ed. Program completed a plan of study which included a segment entitled "Professional Education", which was represented by three or four courses. The courses were usually selected from a list of 7 - 11 courses. Below you will find a list of these courses. Please indicate which courses you took; then rate each course, first in terms of its value to you in your present occupational setting and secondly, in terms of its personal value to you. Please be sure to rate all courses you took. Use the following rating scale:

- 0 Not applicable
- 1 Extremely valuable
- 2 Moderately valuable
- 3 Difficult to decide
- 4 Of relatively little value
- 5 Of no value whatsoever

Course Number	Course Title	Check All Courses Taken	Occupational Value	Personal Value
404/504	History of Education			
405/505	Philosophy of Education			
408/508	Tests and Measurements			
411/511	Mental Hygiene for Teachers			
601	Current Trends in Curriculum			
602	Advanced Human Growth and Development			
603	Principles and Practices of Research			
607	Comparative Education			
640	Curriculum Development			
647	Advanced Educational Psychology			
660	Secondary School Curriculum			

END OF QUESTIONNAIRE. THANK YOU.

Data Management

1. Questionnaire mailed with cover letter, instructions, and postage-paid return envelope with respondents name on return envelope.
2. When completed questionnaire received, return envelope used as check for respondent; then envelope destroyed and respondent withdrawn from population listing.
3. Each questionnaire item coded and double-checked for accuracy. Then codes entered on data coding sheets for key punch. The transfer is checked and all punch cards verified.
4. Updated population list gives daily reading of response rate. Allows for ease in decision-making with regard to need for additional mailings to population.
5. The process above (steps 1-4) is completed for each population mailing.
6. When all data is assembled, SPSS program cards are prepared, computer program is applied to the data, and subsequent print-out is used to analyze results of the evaluation study.

Sequence of Events

- | | |
|--|--|
| 1. Preparation of Materials
Date: 11-5-75 | 5. Tally for Returns
(same as #3)
Date: 12-4-75 |
| 2. First Mail-Out
Date: 11-10-75 | 6. Decision Point for
Second Follow-Up
Date: 12-4-75 |
| 3. Return Tally
Date: 11-19-75 | 7. Preparation of Data
Date: 12-11-75 |
| 4. Second Mail-Out
Date: 11-26-75 | 8. Statistical Analysis
Date: 1-26-76 |